

CALIFORNIA HORSE RACING BOARD

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REPORT OF THE BOARD OF STEWARDS

Los Alamitos Quarter Horse Racing Association

Cypress, California

TO THE CALIFORNIA HORSE RACING BOARD

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Report of the Board of Stewards for the week of December 6 - 10, 2023.

WEDNESDAY

12/06/23¹

DUTY STEWARD - SATURDAY ENTRIES

Tom Ward will be on entries this week and will also handle the minutes. Entries for Saturday went fairly well, as the card was drawn toward later afternoon hours. The eight race card will be headed by the Grade I Champion of Champions, featuring ten of the best horses in the country.

THURSDAY

12/07/23¹

SUNDAY ENTRIES - SATURDAY PANEL - HEARING DAY

Entries are being accepted for the Sunday card this morning. The feature race of the evening will be the 2 Million Futurity. The Los Alamitos Panel met this morning, the outcome of which put two horses on the "Hard Watch" list.

A formal hearing was held this morning as Los Alamitos security issued citations to Trainer Gail Ruffu and Outrider Lorenzo Ruiz for violation of California Horse Racing Board rule #1874 (Disorderly Conduct). According to the citation, on December 1, at approximately 10:30 a.m., Mr. Ruiz was assaulted by Ms. Ruffu when the two were in close proximity in the Racing Office.

In addition to the Stewards, attending the hearing were Ms. Gail Ruffu, who was accompanied by her counsel, Edwin Hur, Esq, Mr. Lorenzo Ruiz, the alleged victim, Mr. Kevin Kitashima, representing the CHRB, Mr. Fernando Gomez, who was acting as an observer for security, and Michelle Derieg, who recorded the proceedings.

The two individuals involved have had issues between them for quite some time, stemming from the fact that Mr. Ruiz claimed a horse from Ms. Ruffu. She made a

number of unsuccessful attempts to have the horse returned to her, culminating in a negative ruling from the court. In this latest dust-up, Mr. Ruiz testified that he was in the Racing Office to pick up his paycheck and encountered Ms. Ruffu blocking his departure. He said her demeanor indicated to him that she was not going to move, so he said words to the effect that "If you don't move, I may have to run over you". The next thing he knew, Ms. Ruffu hit him in the head. As is normal in these instances, Ms. Ruffu had a different version. She testified that she was in the office to obtain a set of race conditions when the incident took place. Her depiction of the event was that she was in his way and Mr. Ruiz aggressively "chest bumped" her on two occasions. Just before the second bump she threw up her right hand, which contained the race conditions and made contact with Mr. Ruiz' face. She was adamant that she did not intentionally strike him.

There were two witnesses to the event who testified. Mr. Nate Estrada, who works as the Assistant Racing Secretary, observed the altercation and said that although he did not see the build-up to the incident, he observed Ms. Ruffu strike Mr. Ruiz with her right hand. He said it was a "punch", not a "slap". The second witness, Ms. Isamar Guerrero, who works in the Racing Office, said that she observed Ms. Ruffu strike Mr. Ruiz with her left fist. She heard words exchanged, but did not pay attention to what was said. Neither witness noticed any aggressive behavior from Mr. Ruiz, nor did they notice papers in Ms. Ruffu's hand.

We will review testimony and render a decision shortly.

FRIDAY

12/08/23¹

SUNDAY SCRATCHES AND PANEL

The Sunday card was a chore to fill, as management opted to run TEN races. The Los Alamitos Panel met this morning, the outcome of which resulted in two Panel scratches for ongoing veterinarian issues. In the first race, #5 Flag Salute will be scratched, while #6 Circle Your Bet will be declared from the fourth event. There is one Hard Watch horse on the program, also in the fourth race.

SATURDAY

12/09/23¹

EARLY DECLARATIONS

2 nd Race	#4 Naughty Niko (Vet-injured) Refund of \$314.55
5 th Race	#1 He Travels (Vet-sick) Refund of \$426.40

12/09/23²

RIDER EXCUSED

Jockey Francisco Orduna Rojas was excused from his mounts this evening due to illness. Replacement riders were named.

12/09/23³

RULING

Ruling #152

Jockey Joseph Belloc, Jr. is fined FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS (\$500.00)* for violation of California Horse Racing Board Rule #1688 (b)(8) (Use of Riding Crop – more than six times during the running of the race) while riding Jess Being Famous in the eighth race at Los Alamitos Race Course on December 3, 2023.

This ruling was issued after Mr. Belloc had viewed the eighth race from December 3, during which he violated the "crop" rule. Mr. Belloc offered no excuse, explaining that he just lost count of the strikes.

12/09/23⁴

NO DRONE ZONE

The Stewards were informed that our best officiating tools, the drones, would not be of use tonight. Since it had been very windy all day and into the evening, this writer assumed, wrongly as it turned out, that wind was the reason for keeping them grounded. Not so. It turned out that the “no fly” edict came from the FAA, as the Commander-in-Chief was in Southern California for a fund raising effort and there is always a 30 mile radius “no fly zone” surrounding him at all times. Fortunately, the racing program was clean.

12/09/23⁵

VOIDED CLAIM

A claim deposited by Trainer Vann Belvoir in the first race for #2 Famous Rock Star was voided as the horse was “off” in the right foreleg during its time in the detention barn. The horse, which was the winner, was returned to the barn of Jesus Garcia.

12/09/23⁶

QUIET EVENING

Aside from the aforementioned claim being voided, the rest of the eight race program was free from incidents.

12/09/23⁷

DAILY ATTENDANCE & HANDLE

On track	1,549	\$161,993.00
Off track	1,355	\$278,619.20
Out of state + ADW	N/A	\$978,496.78
Total	2,904	\$1,419,108.98

SUNDAY

12/10/23¹

EARLY DECLARATIONS

2nd Race #2 Friendly Shuffle (Vet-injured) Refund of \$107.10
6th Race #3 El Favorito (Stewards) Refund of \$75.00
8th Race #2 Tres Luna (Vet-sick) Refund of \$140.50

12/10/23²

JOCKEY EXCUSED

Armando Cervantes was excused from his engagements this evening as he was not feeling up to par. Replacements were named.

12/10/23³

RULING

Ruling #153

Jockey Panfilo V. Alegria is fined FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS (\$500.00)* for violation of California Horse Racing Board Rule #1688 (b)(8) (Use of Riding Crop – more than six times during the running of the race) while riding Call Me Winner in the fourth race at Los Alamitos Race Course on December 9, 2023.

The foregoing ruling was issued following a video review with the rider. He acknowledged his mistake and said he would be more aware in the future.

12/10/23⁴

TRAINER OBJECTION – NO CHANGE

The objection sign was posted after the third race as trainer Jerry Wallace, II (2nd, #1 Chevy Girl) lodged a claim of foul against Diego Herrera (1st, #6 Hollywood Rumor) for interference nearing the finish. Mr. Wallace felt that the winner altered course, and in doing so took his horse's path.

After speaking with the riders involved and reviewing video of the stretch run, the Stewards unanimously voted to dismiss the objection. While the winner did drift in, it was clear when it did so.

12/10/23⁵

REFUNDS

There were two late declarations from the ninth race this evening, both due to incidents at the starting gate. The first scratch took place when #7 Winners Share flipped in the gate, then broke through the stall doors and ran off. The second incident happened while the field was circling behind the gate. #4 Kickin Famous got loose from the pony and ran off into the stable area. The combined refund from the two declarations totaled \$43,668.23.

12/10/23⁶

DAILY ATTENDANCE & HANDLE

On track	797	\$165,669.90
Off track	1,115	\$310,370.70
Out of state + ADW	N/A	\$2,040,665.69
Total	1,912	\$2,516,706.29

TRACK SAFETY REPORT

The weekly inspection was conducted on December 10, 2023. There were no equine deaths to report. During this reporting period, 6 horses were added to the Veterinarian's List as follows: 2 for soundness, 2 for injury, and 2 for sickness. Three horses previously on the Veterinarian's list were examined and removed from the list. This report was submitted by Steward Tom Ward.

SUMMARY

	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat 12/09	Sun 12/10	Week	Meet
Accidents	D			0	0	0	12
Cal-Bred Races	A			0	0	0	16
Claims	R			0	1	1	134
Disqualification	K			0	0	0	32
Inquiries		D		0	1	1	52
Refunds		A		2	5	7	465
Rulings		Y		1	1	2	153
Voided Claims		S		1	0	1	38

Stewards' Attendance: Stewards Tom Ward, Ron Church, James Dreyer, and Safety Steward Paul Atkinson were in attendance during this reporting period.

Tom Ward, Steward

Ron Church, Steward

James Dreyer, Steward

Paul Atkinson, Safety Steward